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STREAMLINING NATIONAL SECURITY WORKSHOP

The Overseas Group

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This paper presents the discussions, issues, and recommendations developed by a working group on Overseas Security during a workshop on Streamlining National Security, which was conducted at the U.S. Army War College from 5 to 7 September 2001.

Over the past decade, even as the international security environment underwent significant change, U.S. national security organizations remained relatively unchanged. After his election, President Bush directed his national security team to undertake a sweeping review of future strategies and their supporting structures. That still on-going review is intended to identify what changes may be required to ensure that the numerous and varied organizations, structures, and processes associated with the creation and execution of U.S. national security policies and procedures are effective, efficient, and affordable.

Within that context, more than sixty subject matter experts representing state and federal agencies, the private sector, and academia met at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, September 5–7, 2001, for a workshop conducted by the Army War College's Center for Strategic Leadership to explore challenges and opportunities associated with the concept of Streamlining National Security Overseas and in the Homeland. Specifically, workshop participants, working through pre-set issues, explored concepts for restructuring certain areas within existent national security organizations looking for methods that would contribute to improved effectiveness and efficiency within these organizations. Ultimately, workshop participants developed consensus views on certain issues and developed new issues to be further explored in future forums.

Distinguished speakers opened the workshop with background presentations examining innovation in the U.S. Army in the 1920s and 1930s, the process of U.S. defense reform in the 1980s, and the factors that stimulate advocates of streamlining our national security organizations today. Subsequently, the workshop split into two working groups to examine organizations and processes; one group looked at Homeland Security, the other Overseas operations. Afterwards, the two groups came back together for a final plenary session.

This paper summarizes the preliminary findings and identifies some critical issues raised by the Overseas sessions participants. A similar CSL Issue Paper is available regarding the Homeland Security sessions of the workshop.

Overseas Group Discussions

Policy-making Interfaces

Participants generally agreed that U.S. interests overseas would remain those enduring through the previous century: safety of American citizens, freedom of passage, access to markets and resources, and so on. A key finding was the need to develop and articulate our vision at home and abroad and to garner support for domestic and international common cause. It is important for the U.S. to maintain our global leadership and influence with all state and non-state actors in support of coalitions, treaties, and institutions. We need to mobilize and synchronize U.S. diplomatic, informational, military, and economic resources in support of our leadership role. In addition, the group agreed

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that the U.S. needs to remain engaged and committed through a visible and effective presence. For the U.S. military, this includes conducting/participating in combined training and exercises. Bottom line: A truly comprehensive U.S. National Security Strategy is needed.

A major reorientation of U.S. policy toward Asia impacts relations with China, underscores the value of closer relations with India, recognizes Russia as a Pacific power, and calls for a redefinition or clarification of Japan's role in collective security. The group believes such a fundamental shift from our Post WWII focus on Europe/NATO to the Far East will raise the question of our ongoing commitment to European issues and interests. In response we are likely to see the Europeanization of NATO leadership, could see a rapprochement in EU-Russian relations, and might expect additional rifts/fault lines within the EU/NATO and between the U.S. and Europe.



Improvements in interagency coordination require changing our stovepipe culture through creating a shared vision and values, making interagency training and experience mandatory for promotion, and, perhaps, limiting the number of political appointees at the mid and lower levels of pertinent government agencies. Accomplishing all these could require amendment of the National Security Act of 1947. If so, clearly Congress will have to be engaged in a manner similar to the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (Goldwater-Nichols Act).

Defense Structure Interfaces

Participants agreed that an optimal alignment does not exist between the geographic and functional areas of responsibility (AOR) of the subordinate elements of the Office of Secretary Defense (OSD), Joint Staff (JS), Service staffs, Department of State (DOS), National Security Council (NSC), and others. Policies establishing authorities, and responsibilities, or for designating resources to perform overseas operations frequently appear to be insufficiently integrated. The group therefore suggests the need for a broadly written "National Security Unified Command Plan (UCP)" to replace the existing Department of Defense (DOD)-only UCP.

There was general agreement that the Regional Combatant Commands need some sort of focused "standing" Joint Force Headquarters element. Participants held that the war-fighting Commanders in Chiefs (Regional CINCs) need to retain responsibility for organizing and training their Standing Joint Force (SJF)¹ headquarters, based on unique CINC AOR requirements. However, participants also maintained that compatibility and integration of equipment, processes, and procedures pertaining to C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) in all command and command support elements across the entire national security structure are required.



Although there was agreement that JTFs must function across the full spectrum, from peacetime engagement to war, the group held that SJF Headquarters (SJFHQ) staffs and Operational Planning Groups (OPGs) might have either a specialized or general-purpose focus. Irrespective of its focus, a SJF headquarters itself needs to be multifunctional, fully interactive with interagency elements as well as with any OPGs operating forward, and linked seamlessly with robust feedback capacity to all other command and control elements regardless of their parent agency. As to numbers required, one proposal was for Regional CINCs to have one SJFHQ fully operational, with the additional capability for another completely equipped back-up SJFHQ that could be fielded from its own resources. The number and staffing of OPGs, however, would be dependent on geographic issues, contingencies, and theater operations plans. Finally, it was asserted that TRANSCOM and SPACECOM should probably possess "standing" deployable support elements to "plug in" to any Regional CINC JTF designated for mission execution.

To streamline the force, JTFs should be structured with Joint Force Component Commands (JFCC). There was also agreement that the subordinate, executing elements of the SJF headquarters must train jointly, because habitual association is one key to early success. There was, however, no agreement on whether it was necessary—or feasible—for subordinate elements to be "assigned" to such a headquarters.

It is recognized that CINCs will not have all the JTF resources needed continuously on-hand and that some sharing amongst CINCs will be required. To eliminate redundancies to the maximum extent possible, CINCs should consider interservice total capabilities when designing their JTF structures.

It was suggested that there are significant opportunities for force structure savings from developing joint intelligence, medical, and signal units. Some participants believed that there is an opportunity to eliminate redundant service specific HQ elements no longer required for C4ISR, but agreement was not universal. It was also suggested that selected functions done by uniformed personnel could be outsourced.

¹ The "T" for "Task" has been removed from SJTF to indicate that this headquarters is not organized solely to accomplish a single purpose in time but is an enduring organization.

Finally, it was proposed that a re-examination is required to determine whether we need more multifunctional service members instead of special purpose service members.

Emerging Technological Interfaces

Fighting in unfamiliar theaters will present a host of new challenges. The Asia-Pacific scenario highlighted the fact that jungle and mountain environments, with poor existing infrastructure, located a great distance from U.S. military bases, potentially create some unique technology requirements. New C4ISR capabilities, such as those required to locate light enemy infantry in a jungle environment, are needed. We need to reduce energy consumption and employ labor-saving technologies. We need effective counters to anti-access measures. Mobile lab systems are needed to counter possible unknown tropical diseases, as is the capability to monitor for biological Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).



Technology may assist streamlining in many ways. Electronic technology may be leveraged to increase the span of control and/or the elimination of levels of command. We can contract specific functions, identify likely “crisis” locations, and start making provisional contracts for required services with commercial firms possessing the appropriate technologies, rather than acquiring military-specific items or organizations. It should be possible to utilize civilian capabilities to help protect the military against hacking and cyber attacks by providing tax breaks or other incentives to business for “hardening” of communications hardware and software. To reduce logistics burdens, we need to design systems that are “FedEx-able,” that is, they can be shipped in common commercial cargo transporters. The group agreed that there were probably capabilities within each Service Component that, through careful planning, could meet the need of the entire JTF. For example, naval ships may have the capability to produce sufficient desalinated water to supply an entire JTF, thus eliminating the need for the other service components to supply their own water. Some participants believed that the Services should have common requirements and acquisition policies, similar to the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defense model, to streamline technology and acquisition decisions, thereby reducing DOD’s total costs without detriment to form, fit, and function.

Overseas Consensus Findings

1. “Trust” in other members of the joint/interagency team remains the key component of effective teamwork. Organization and process must assist in building and fostering “trust.”
2. Reliable, uninhibited communications is the most frequently cited capability requirement, regardless of echelon of HQs or functional mission. Therefore the improvement of inter-service and interagency interoperable communications capabilities should be a high priority.
3. “Adequate” knowledge is a prerequisite to valid and effective decision making. Organizations and processes must provide that knowledge—either building it gradually over time, well prior to the need for a decision, or very rapidly providing it at the moment of decision.

Issues Requiring Further Exploration

A number of significant issues require further examination and analysis before concluding that any specific changes to organization, structure, or process are warranted:

1. Workshop participants recognized that there are numerous and high-level advocates of a fundamental shift in U.S. national focus from Europe to the Far East. Participants cautioned that, while there may be significant factors favoring such a shift in focus, the innumerable first-, second-, and third-order effects still need to be carefully analyzed. As an example, the impact of such a shift on existing relationships with our European allies and Russia may have destabilizing implications—even as regional and global stability are recognized U.S. national interests.
2. The need for improved interagency coordination was a recurring theme. There was less agreement, however:
 - a. Whether the priority need is within Washington D.C. or at the regional/CINC level, or whether the root problem is in-country among executing actors.
 - b. On the degree to which existing interagency and DOD structures and organizations enable or impede deliberate or crisis planning and execution. Are “interagency coordination” problems structural and organizational, or are they process and personality driven?

3. Lacking such agreement, the actual benefits of many suggested “solutions” remain uncertain. As a single example, would establishing a common geographical alignment of Federal agencies, especially DOD and DOS, actually improve things, and if so, in what manner? If re-alignment would be beneficial, should we re-align the DOD CINC AORs to line up with the current DOS regional bureaus or vice-versa, or do we need to draw completely new common regional boundaries—corresponding to some prospective national security vision—for all major U.S. agencies?

4. There was universal agreement on the need to ensure integration and synchronization of joint and combined military activities at every echelon of command during preparation for and execution of all theater operations. There was relatively little agreement, however, on the manner or degree to which current headquarters and organizational structures meet this requirement, nor with regard to the viability or effectiveness of the many proposed alternatives. For example, to be most effective, should “standing” JTFs be organized on a regional (Europe, Asia, etc.), geographical (desert, jungle, oceanic, etc.), or functional (maritime blockade, strike/raid, humanitarian assistance, etc.) basis?

5. The ability to resource proposed organizations and structures may be a serious impediment to change. Most participants’ revised structures included the creation of additional organizations or required existing organizations to undertake new missions/processes, yet any agreement on “bill payers” was elusive. A broader and more detailed knowledge and understanding of all the roles of every element of each existing organization involved in current policy making, planning, and execution is necessary before “redundancies” can accurately be identified. In addition, of course, even where remedies appear to have merit, short-term transition costs may cause total DOD or interagency costs to be higher than simply maintaining the status quo.

Conclusion

Considering the revision of organizations and structures so as to streamline the overseas aspects of our national security infrastructure is certainly warranted. Before actually making any major changes in current structures, systems, and processes, however, many major issues—including those specifically identified during this workshop—require significantly more thorough examination.

The Center for Strategic Leadership will pursue the development and examination of these issues through various venues and forums. It is hoped that the efforts of the participants at this workshop and in follow-on efforts will ultimately contribute to a significantly improved U.S. national security structure.

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